REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 20, 21 and 31 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 12, 22-30 and 32-34 are canceled to place the application in condition for allowance.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges that the Office Action indicates that claims 1, 4, 20, 21 and 31 are allowed.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. The Claims Satisfy the Requirements under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 12, 22-30 and 32-34 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claims are now canceled to place the application in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, is respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 4, 20, 21 and 31 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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JAO:RJK/mdw

Date: January 7, 2004

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